

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
Southern District of OhioIn the Matter of the Search of
UNITED STATES PRIORITY MAIL EXPRESS PARCEL EI 095
696 867 US AND UNITED STATES PRIORITY MAIL EXPRESS
PARCEL EI 095 696 87

Case No. 2:22-mj-176

APPLICATION FOR A SEARCH WARRANT

I, a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government, request a search warrant and state under penalty of perjury that I have reason to believe that on the following person or property

UNITED STATES PRIORITY MAIL EXPRESS PARCEL EI 095 696 867 US AND UNITED STATES PRIORITY MAIL EXPRESS
PARCEL EI 095 696 875 USlocated in the Southern District of Ohio, there is now concealed (identify the person or describe the property to be seized):

A quantity of a controlled substance and/or proceeds which are evidence thereof, and/or contraband, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 843(b), and 846.

The basis for the search under Fed. R. Crim. P. 41(c) is (check one or more):

- ☒ evidence of a crime;
- ☒ contraband, fruits of crime, or other items illegally possessed;
- ☒ property designed for use, intended for use, or used in committing a crime;
- ☐ a person to be arrested or a person who is unlawfully restrained.

The search is related to a violation of:

Code Section	Offense Description
21 U.S.C. 841(a)(1)	Possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance
21 U.S.C. 843(b)	Prohibited use of a communication center (U.S. Mail)
21 U.S.C. 846	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance

The application is based on these facts:

As set forth in the attached Affidavit of Postal Inspector Justin D. Koble, incorporated herein by reference

- ☒ Continued on the attached sheet.
- ☒ Delayed notice of 30 days (give exact ending date if more than 30 days: April 13, 2022) is requested under 18 U.S.C. § 3103a, the basis of which is set forth on the attached sheet.

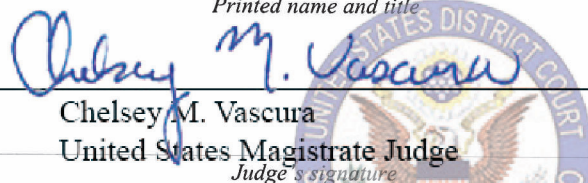


Applicant's signature

Justin D. Koble, U.S. Postal Inspector

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 3/15/2022City and state: Columbus, Ohio

Chelsey M. Vascura
United States Magistrate Judge

Judge's signature

Hon. Chelsey M. Vascura, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE OPENING AND SEARCH OF:)	
)	CASE NO. 2:22-mj-176
)	
UNITED STATES PRIORITY MAIL)	MAGISTRATE Vascura
EXPRESS PARCEL EI 095 696 867 US)	
AND)	
UNITED STATES PRIORITY MAIL)	
EXPRESS PARCEL EI 095 696 875 US)	

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION
UNDER RULE 41 FOR A WARRANT TO SEARCH AND SEIZE**

I, Justin D. Koble, being duly sworn, do hereby state the following:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a United States Postal Inspector with the United States Postal Inspection Service (“USPIS”) and have been so employed since July 2014. I am currently assigned to the Narcotics and Money Laundering Team at the USPIS’s Columbus, Ohio field office. In this capacity, I am responsible for investigating the illegal use of the United States Mails for the purpose of transporting controlled substances such as methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl, fentanyl-related analogs, cocaine, and other controlled substances, in violation of, among other statutes, Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) (manufacturing, distribution, or possession with the intent to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance), 843(b) (unlawful use of a communication facility in the commission of a crime), and 846 (drug conspiracy). In addition, I am responsible for investigating possible violations of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1956 and 1957 (money laundering).

2. I have been involved in the investigation and discovery of drug contraband and drug proceeds on numerous occasions. I have personally been the affiant for search warrants that

have resulted in the discovery of controlled substances and drug proceeds. My current assignment to the Columbus Processing and Distribution Center (“P&DC”) involves investigating the use of the U.S. Mails by drug traffickers, in which established drug package profiles, surveillance, and drug detection dogs, among other investigative tools, are utilized.

3. Experience and drug trafficking intelligence have demonstrated that Priority Mail and Priority Mail Express are commonly used to transport drugs and drug proceeds because of their reliability and the time pressures they place on law enforcement agents to execute a successful controlled delivery.

4. This affidavit is made in support of an application under Rule 41 of Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, for a warrant to search for and seize evidence, instrumentalities, contraband, and fruits of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) (manufacturing, distribution, or possession with the intent to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance), 843(b) (unlawful use of a communication facility in the commission of a crime), 846 (drug conspiracy), and of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1716 (mailing injurious material) from the United States Priority Mail Express parcel bearing United States Postal Service (“USPS”) tracking number EI 095 696 867 US (hereinafter “SUBJECT PARCEL #1”) and the USPS Priority Mail Express parcel bearing USPS tracking number EI 095 696 875 US (hereinafter “SUBJECT PARCEL #2”) (collectively the “SUBJECT PARCELS”). The search would be covert and consist of opening the SUBJECT PARCELS, viewing and photographing the contents, and closing the SUBJECT PARCELS.

5. The facts set forth in this affidavit are based on my personal knowledge, knowledge obtained during my participation in this investigation, knowledge obtained from other individuals, review of records related to this investigation, communications with others who have

personal knowledge of the events and circumstances described herein, and information gained through my training and experience. Because this affidavit is submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause in support of the application for a search warrant, this affidavit does not set forth each and every fact learned by me during the course of this investigation.

SUBJECT PARCELS

6. On or about March 14, 2022, USPIS interdiction personnel in Columbus, Ohio interdicted the SUBJECT PARCELS at the USPS Eastland Finance Unit, 4255 Macsway Ave, Columbus, Ohio 43232. SUBJECT PARCEL #1 is addressed to “Shannon Mcaa, 823 Oleander St, Hemet, CA 92543” with a return address of “Thomas Reed, 7399 Kenrich Dr, Canal Winchester, OH 43110”. SUBJECT PARCEL #2 is addressed to “Shelton Roberts, 791 Oleander St, Hemet, CA 92543” with a return address matching SUBJECT PARCEL #1, “Thomas Reed, 7399 Kenrich Dr, Canal Winchester, OH 43110”. The SUBJECT PARCELS are both white USPS Priority Mail Express mailing boxes measuring approximately 11 ¼” x 8 ¾” x 6. SUBJECT PARCEL #1 weighs approximately 2 pounds, 2 ounces and SUBJECT PARCEL #2 weighs approximately 1 pound, 9 ounces. The \$63.50 in US postage affixed to SUBJECT PARCEL #1 and the \$56.00 in US postage affixed to SUBJECT PARCEL #2 was paid for using a credit or debit card. The issuing bank and cardholder information was not immediately available due to privacy concerns but will be obtained by investigators in the future.



Subject Parcel 1

Subject Parcel 2

PROBABLE CAUSE

7. Among the characteristics of the drug profile possessed by the SUBJECT PARCELS is the “source state” origination of the parcels, as well as the particular destination of the SUBJECT PARCELS.

8. Your affiant submits that the destination state of the SUBJECT PARCELS bears on the issue of probable cause here. For example, US Postal Inspectors, special agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”), and other intelligence sources have identified California as a source state for illegal drugs flowing into Central Ohio and a destination state for the proceeds from the sale of these illegal drugs. Based on Your affiants training and experience, I know drug traffickers frequently utilize various shipping and mail entities, including the United States Postal Service, for the shipment of controlled substances. Frequently the same shipping entity utilized for the shipment of controlled substances us also utilized for the shipment of the proceeds derived from the sale of these controlled substances.

9. On or about March 14, 2022, checks of USPS, law enforcement, and open-source electronic databases were conducted to determine the validity of the destination information

contained on SUBJECT PARCEL #1. The destination address, “823 Oleander St” was found to be a valid and deliverable address in the 92543 zip code. Checks of law enforcement databases identified a Shannon Mccaa-Parker associated with the address. It was noted the spelling of the name “Mcaa”, as indicated on SUBJECT PARCEL #1, differs from the spelling of “Mccaa-Parker” as identified using law enforcement databases.

10. On or about March 14, 2022, checks of USPS, law enforcement, and open-source electronic databases were conducted to determine the validity of the destination information contained on SUBJECT PARCEL #2. The destination address, “791 Oleander St” was found to be a valid and deliverable address in the 92543 zip code. Checks of law enforcement databases identified a Shelton W. Roberts associated with the address. Additional checks of law enforcement databases identified a Patrick P. Parker associated with this address as well as the address indicated on SUBJECT PARCEL #1, 823 Oleander St., Hemet, California 92543.

11. On or about March 14, 2022, checks of USPS, law enforcement, and open-source electronic databases were conducted to determine the validity of the return information contained on the SUBJECT PARCELS. The return address, “7399 Kenrich Dr”, was determined to be a valid and deliverable address in the 43110 zip code. However, the name “Thomas Reed” was not found to be associated with this address. Your affiant is aware, based upon training and experience, that names found not to be associated with addresses on packages destined for California can be one indicator of a package containing illegal narcotics proceeds or other contraband.

12. Regarding both the above-described return and destination addresses, I know through training and experience that shippers of drugs and drug proceeds will often list a false or non-existent return address, or use a valid return address with a false sender’s name, no name, or

the address of a multi-unit building without indicating an apartment or suite number, to reduce the possibility of identification and apprehension by law enforcement. Based on Your affiant's training and experience, I know mailers of drug proceeds will often utilize legitimate recipient names and addresses due to the fact the mailing of US currency through the US Mail is not a crime in and of itself.

BACKGROUND OF INVESTIGATION

13. Beginning in December 2021, US Postal Inspectors and Central Ohio HIDTA Task Force Officers began a drug trafficking investigation involving the shipment of methamphetamine and cocaine from California and Nevada to central Ohio. During the course of the investigation, Wesley Durrell Johnson (JOHNSON), Terrell Harris (HARRIS), Cierra Stratton-Zebib (STRATTON), Ronnie (WHITE), and others have been found to be associated with this drug trafficking organization (DTO). This DTO is known to ship large quantities of methamphetamine and cocaine via the USPS. Surveillance of these parcel deliveries has shown the parcels suspected to contain controlled substances are frequently transported from their delivery point to the Player's Lineup Barbershop (the "BARBERSHOP"), 5518 E. Livingston Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43232.

14. In December 2021, US Postal Inspectors in Columbus, Ohio seized the United States Postal Service (USPS) Priority Mail parcel bearing USPS tracking number 9505 5131 8438 1334 9188 34 (the "Summit St PARCEL"). The Summit St PARCEL was addressed to To: Thomas Leonard, 1337 Summit Street, Columbus, Ohio 43201" with a return address of "From: Tracie Thurmond, 2516 Segouia, La Verne, Ca 91750". The Summit St PARCEL weighed approximately 36 pounds, 12.6 ounces and was mailed from La Verne, CA 91750. A federal search warrant for the Summit St PARCEL was applied for and granted in the Southern District

of Ohio. The search warrant was executed resulting in the seizure of approximately 11.45 kilograms of suspected methamphetamine from the Summit St PARCEL.

15. Through review of USPS business records, US Postal Inspectors identified the USPS Priority Mail parcel bearing tracking number 9505 5145 2328 1328 7941 35 (the “18th Ave PARCEL”). The 18th Ave PARCEL was addressed to “To: Jason Keys, 1109 E. 18th ave, Columbus, Ohio 43211” with a return address of “From: Melyssa Pinedo, 1121 Belleville Ct, Claremont, Ca 91711”. The 18th Ave PARCEL weighed approximately 39 pounds, 3.2 ounces and was mailed from San Dimas, CA 91773. A federal search warrant for the 18th Ave PARCEL was applied for and granted in the Eastern Division of California. The search warrant was executed resulting in the seizure of approximately 11.32 kilograms of suspected methamphetamine from the 18th Ave PARCEL.

16. Through further review of USPS business records related to the seizures of the Summit St PARCEL and the 18th Ave PARCEL, investigators identified several addresses in the Columbus, Ohio metro area which had received similar parcels from the same geographic area of California. These parcels were also similar in weight and were paid for in cash. Many of these addresses were also found to have received USPS parcels from the Las Vegas, Nevada metro area.

17. US Postal Inspectors also identified the address 3180 Elim Manor Court, Unit 112, Columbus, Ohio 43232. USPS business records indicate between March 2021 and the present, this address has received at least twelve USPS Priority Mail parcels from southern California and the Las Vegas, Nevada metro. Checks of law enforcement databases determined one of the current residents of the address to be HARRIS.

18. On February 25, 2022, US Postal Inspectors interdicted the USPS Priority Mail

parcel bearing USPS tracking number 9505 5138 1083 2054 7715 16 (“Elim Manor PARCEL”) upon arrival at the USPS Columbus, Ohio Processing and Distribution Center. The Elim Manor PARCEL was observed to be addressed to “To: T. Harris, 3180 Elim Manor Court, Unit 112., Columbus, OH 43232” with a return address of “From: Steven Davis, 41423 Temeku Dr, Temecula, CA 92591”. The Elim Manor PARCEL weighed approximately 29 pounds, 4.2 ounces and was mailed from Wildomar Main Post Office, 21392 Palomar Street, Wildomar, CA 92595. The \$136.80 in US postage affixed to the Elim Manor PARCEL was paid for in cash.

19. On February 25, 2025, at approximately 11:55 a.m., a US Postal Inspector, serving in an undercover capacity as a USPS Letter Carrier, delivered the Elim Manor PARCEL to 3180 Elim Manor Court, Unit 112, Columbus, Ohio 43232.

20. At approximately 12:37 p.m., investigators in surveillance positions in the surrounding area and with an eye on the main entrance to the building observed HARRIS arrive at the location at driving a gray Honda Accord bearing Ohio license plate HXY8736. HARRIS parked the Honda Accord outside of the main entrance to 3180 Elim Manor Court and entered the building. At approximately 12:50 am, HARRIS exited the main doors of 3180 Elim Manor Court carrying a large parcel matching the size and description of the Elim Manor PARCEL. HARRIS loaded this parcel into the back seat of his vehicle and departed the area.

21. HARRIS was followed via GPS Tracker and physical surveillance as he drove to a residence at 3244 E Fulton St, Columbus, Ohio 43227 and parked in the driveway. HARRIS and another black male, later determined from Ohio driver’s license photo to be WHITE, departed this residence in a 1997 Chevrolet pickup bearing Ohio license plate HHB2367 determined to be registered to WHITE. Surveillance was able to verify that the parcel was still in the Honda Accord where it had been placed by HARRIS upon his picking it up at Elim Manor

Court a short time before. This vehicle was lost by surveillance who waited at 3244 E Fulton St watching the Honda Accord and parcel. A short time later HARRIS and WHITE returned in same truck. HARRIS and WHITE got into the Honda Accord, with WHITE driving, and departed with the parcel. HARRIS and WHITE arrived at the BARBERSHOP at approximately 2:51 p.m.

22. Upon arrival at the BARBERSHOP, WHITE parked in the middle of the parking lot away from other vehicles and remained in the vehicle with the parcel. At approximately 2:57 p.m. a white Jeep Cherokee bearing Indiana license plate FL9954ABT, later determined to have been rented by JOHNSON, arrived at the BARBERSHOP, and drove directly in front of WHITE and HARRIS, who were still sitting in the Honda Accord. The Jeep Cherokee then parked along the curb south of the entrance to the BARBERSHOP. JOHNSON then exited the Jeep and walked into the BARBERSHOP. At approximately 3:02 p.m., WHITE exited the Honda Accord, retrieved the parcel from the rear driver's side seat, and carried it on his shoulder into the BARBERSHOP while HARRIS remained inside the vehicle. At approximately 3:07 p.m., WHITE exited the BARBERSHOP without the parcel, returned to the Honda Accord, and departed the parking lot.

23. On March 14, 2022, law enforcement was conducting surveillance at the BARBERSHOP. JOHNSON, HARRIS, WHITE, and STRATTON were all observed exiting the BARBERSHOP. JOHNSON was observed to be carrying two wrapped bundles in his right hand. In his left hand, he was observed to be carrying one or more USPS mailing boxes (see Photo 1 below). JOHNSON walked with STRATTON to a white Jeep Compass bearing Kentucky license plate A2L978, which was later determined to be an Avis Rental vehicle, parked in the lot in front of the BARBERSHOP. JOHNSON gave the bundles and the USPS mailing

boxes to STRATTON who departed the area in the Jeep Compass.



Photo 1

24. Surveillance units maintained surveillance of STRATTON, following her to the USPS Eastland Finance Unit, 4255 Macsway Ave, Columbus, Ohio 43232. STRATTON exited the vehicle and entered the post office without the bundles. STRATTON returned to her vehicle a short time latter carrying something small in her hand, suspected to be USPS Priority Mail Express mailing labels.

25. A few minutes later, STRATTON exited her vehicle again and entered the post office, this time carrying what appeared to be the two bundles earlier observed to have been given to her by JOHNSON. When STRATTON exited the post office a short time later, she was no longer carrying the bundles.

26. US Postal Inspectors entered the post office immediately after STRATTON departed the area and took custody of the SUBJECT PARCELS.

EXAMINATION BY DRUG DETECTING CANINE

27. On or about April 15, 2022, US Postal Inspectors contacted Trooper Lindsay Barrett, Ohio State Highway Patrol, who is the handler for “Gali” a Drug Detecting Canine.

“Gali” has been certified by the Ohio Peace Officers Training Association since May 2020 for tracking, article search, and the detection of Marijuana, Cocaine, Heroin, Methamphetamine, and their derivatives. K-9 “Gali” has had over 200 hours of training at the Ohio Highway Patrol K9 Training Facility. Both in training and actual deployments, K-9 “Gali” has successfully detected narcotics; demonstrating clear, passive alerts, establishing himself as a highly reliable police service dog.

28. Although not trained specifically in the detection of currency, currency which is generated through the sale of controlled substances frequently contains residual odors of these controlled substances which are detectable to a drug detecting canine.

29. The SUBJECT PARCELS were hidden among other parcels and USPS mail processing equipment and K-9 “Gali” was allowed to search the entire area. Trooper Barrett concluded that K-9 “Gali” did alert positively and independently to each of the SUBJECT PARCELS. Based on that alert, Trooper Barrett concluded that the odor of one or more of the drugs K-9 “Gali” is trained and certified to detect was present.

30. Based upon training and experience, Your affiant respectfully submits that the above information is indicative of drug trafficking activity, and that, based on the above, there is probable cause to search the SUBJECT PARCELS.

31. If one or both of the SUBJECT PARCELS is found to contain controlled substances, these controlled substances will be seized as part of an ongoing drug trafficking investigation. If the SUBJECT PARCELS are found to contain items of evidentiary value which are not contraband, to include currency, these items will be documented, photographed, repackaged and returned to the US Mail for delivery.

32. In accordance with Title 18, United States Code, Section 3103a(b)(3), I request

that the warrant delay notification of the execution of the warrant for 30 days from the execution of the warrant, or until April 13, 2022, because there is reasonable cause to believe that providing immediate notification may have an adverse result, as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2705. Providing immediate notice would seriously jeopardize the investigation by prematurely revealing its existence and giving suspects an opportunity to flee from prosecution, destroy or tamper with evidence, intimidate potential witnesses, notify confederates, and change patterns of behavior. The United States is still conducting its investigation, and intends to continue its investigation with additional surveillance in California and the Southern District of Ohio.

33. In addition, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3103a(b)(2), I request that the warrant prohibit the seizure of “any tangible property, or any wire or electronic communication (as defined in section 2510), or, except as expressly provided in chapter 121, any stored wire or electronic information.” No such property, communications, or information will be seized.

CONCLUSION


34. Based upon the foregoing facts and my training, experience, and expertise as a US Postal Inspector, I submit there is probable cause to search the SUBJECT PARCELS for controlled substances, drug proceeds, and other evidence of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 843(b), and Title 18, United States Code, Section 1716.

35. WHEREFORE, Your affiant respectfully requests that the Court issue a warrant, authorizing agents of the USPIS, including but not limited to other law enforcement agents and technicians assisting in the above-described investigation, to open, view, and photograph the SUBJECT PARCELS and their contents.

36. The above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.


Justin D. Koble
US Postal Inspector

Sworn and subscribed to me
This 15th day of March 2022



CHELSEY M. VASCURA
United States Magistrate Judge